N

A

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE PATROL

ATHABASKA DISTRICT

WINTER 1896-97

BY

INSPECTOR A. M. JARVIS

OTTAWA
GOVERNMENT PRINTING BUREAU
1897

To Ins

T
an ear
T
genera
in thei
the use
admitt
Indian
well kn
traded
Th
close at
Yo
district
settlem
Yo
getting
their lo
With th
vicinity
you con
preserva
subjects
It
indiscri
a kit be
concerne
ox calve
As
establish
opinion
Fro
the und
informat
necessar
I ha
must ren
and the
imprison
can give
the usua
A g
and I ne
road, as
1

0 900443

POLICE PATROL, ATHABASCA DISTRICT, WINTER OF 1896-97.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE,
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER,
REGINA, 21st December, 1896.

To Inspector A. M. JARVIS,
North-west Mounted Police.

The department has decided to send a small party to Athabasca and Slave Lake at an early date, and you have been selected for the duty.

The object in view is to obtain an exhaustive report on the condition of affairs there generally, and particularly to collect information likely to be useful to the government in their future dealings with that territory. Among other subjects for inquiry will be the use, or abuse, of liquor. A considerable quantity goes in under permit, and some is admittedly smuggled. It is also stated that some is used for trading purposes with the Indians, and that, in addition, a considerable quantity of all sorts of extracts, which are well known to be intoxicating, are given to the Indians contrary to law, if not actually traded for furs, &c.

The setting out of poisons and letting fires run will also be subjects requiring your close attention.

You will report on the state of the fisheries, the quantity of lumber in various districts and its condition, whether burned or green, and the districts suitable for settlement, and the supply of hay.

You will also inquire into the increase or decrease of fur and game, particularly getting all possible information *re* the probable number of wood buffalo in the country, their location, and whether the Act *re* their preservation is being strictly carried out. With this object in view you will have to visit as many trading posts as possible in the vicinity of the buffalo grounds. You will direct the attention of all traders and hunters you come across to the necessity of strictly obeying the Game Act and ordinances *re* the preservation of game and fish, and you will explain to them the law on all the above subjects.

It is reported that beaver is decreasing rapidly, in a great measure owing to the indiscriminate killing of young and old, caused by the traders paying the same price for a kit beaver as for a full grown one. You will inquire fully into this, and explain to all concerned the folly of killing immature animals. The number of skins of unborn musk ox calves is rapidly increasing, and you will make inquiries with a view to its prevention.

As on the information obtained by you will, in a great measure, depend the establishing of police posts at an early date, you will report on the best points in your opinion for the police to work from.

From time to time rumours have reached us of murders having been committed in the unorganized territories; these you will investigate and report on, getting all information obtainable from Superintendent Griesbach before proceeding north, and, if necessary, take immediate action.

I have no authority to instruct you *re* your duties as justice of the peace, but you must remember that many of the Indians and small traders may be ignorant of the law, and therefore may have offended unwittingly. It will be impossible at present to imprison in that territory, and in the event of fines not being forthcoming at once, you can give time for their collection, as is usually done here, when, later on, if not paid, the usual imprisonment can be better enforced.

A great deal of tact and judgment will be required in dealing with these matters, and I need not impress upon you the necessity of losing no time unnecessarily on the road, as the season is short. With this object in view, your party must ease the dogs

as much as possible by travelling on snow shoes. From time to time, if you come across a first class dog, you will be at liberty to exchange a poor one for it, paying the necessary amount required. If you find that you cannot finish the work assigned you, in time to return all the way with dogs, you can return by boat, leaving your outfit in charge of some one for the summer, who will summer the dogs also. You can return via Isle a la Crosse and Green Lake if you think advisable.

You have been supplied with copies of all the ordinances and statutes you are likely to require, and have received a letter from the Commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company to their officers in the north, which will be a great assistance to you. It will be necessary for you to keep a copious diary, and to send out short reports whenever possible.

L. W. HERCHMER,
Commissioner.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE,
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER,
REGINA, 3rd May, 1897.

SIR,—I have the the honour to forward herewith, reports just received from Inspector Jarvis on his Athabasca trip, together with the map of the route taken by him.

I propose to station one man and one scout at the following points:—Athabasca Landing, Grand Rapids, Lesser Slave Lake and Fort Smith on the Great Slave River, and am writing to the Hudson's Bay Company, asking them to arrange to let us have supplies at these places at as low a rate as possible.

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your obedient servant.

L. W. HERCHMER,
Commissioner.

The Comptroller,
North-west Mounted Police,
Ottawa.

Re Northern Patrol.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE.
FORT SASKATCHEWAN, 29th April, 1897

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith the following papers, &c., in connection with above, viz.:—

General Report of trip.
Supplementary report *re* different subjects that special reports were asked for.
Return of Proceedings had.
Map, showing route travelled, &c.
Samples of grain grown on the most northerly ranch in America.

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your obedient servant.

A. H. GRIESBACH, *Supt.*
Commanding "G" Division.

The Commissioner
North-west Mounted Police,
Regina.

Re Northern Patrol.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE, "G" Division.
FORT SASKATCHEWAN, 24th April, 1897.

SIR,—I have the honour to state that in compliance with instructions received from the commissioner by wire at Stand Off detachment on the 29th December, 1896, I proceeded by rail to South Edmonton, where I met the commissioner on the 31st of December, and received instructions from him to patrol by dog train the northern country as far as possible, and report thereon, together with other matters of interest to the government.

On the 1st January, 1897, I arrived at Fort Saskatchewan, where I found the three dog trains consisting of four dogs each waiting for me, also two spare dogs, sleds, provisions, &c., &c.

On the 4th January having completed my outfit, I started for Lac La Biche by trail south of the Saskatchewan River, via Saddle Lake, accompanied by Staff-Sergeant Hetherington, guide J. Gullion and dog driver P. Lutit, jr., also the usual monthly patrol from the division.

I arrived at Lac La Biche on the 8th January, where I exchanged two train dogs. I may say this place was the starting point of the expedition as I now left the jurisdiction of "G" Division and had no longer the assistance of the patrol team. I took from there fish for dog feed sufficient to carry me to Heart Lake. The loads were necessarily heavy and the snow deep, and still falling, I was therefore obliged to dispense with our tent and henceforward camped in the open.

Two long days travel over lakes, and principally through muskeg, brought us to Heart Lake, a small trading place or outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company. There is a reserve there of Chippeweyan Indians, consisting of about thirty families, who live principally by hunting and fishing. They told me that they killed about 1,500 fish per annum, but this is probably far less than they really take. They are not farmers, but grain crops and vegetables can be raised there successfully. This band at present (many of them suffering from diseased eyes) are unable to hunt, and are therefore in poor circumstances, I remained over night at this place. The next four days, through bush of jack pine, poplar, tamarac, burnt woods and muskeg took us to Little Jackfish Lake, where I did my first magisterial duty. This was a case of assault, wife vs. husband, the woman being a Cree, the man a Chippeweyan. I dismissed the case with a reprimand, it being a family quarrel.

The Indians were much pleased at the visit of the police and their action towards the suppression of laying out poison. The three families here own between them, ten horses and ten head of cattle, but find stock-raising a failure, as the cattle die from a disease of the bladder which I should suppose to be the effect of alkali, the water in the lake being impregnated, and no fish able to exist.

There is a trail passable in summer close by, from Fort McMurray to Lac La Biche, but the supply of hay is poor. Next day we arrived at Whitefish Lake where I held a meeting of all the Indians in the vicinity, and a few from Portage La Loche, and explained the game, fire and poison ordinances to them, and sent out notices to places in the neighbourhood relative to poison, fires and game. There are thirteen families of Chippeweyans at this place, owning eleven horses and eighteen head of cattle, hay is very scarce, the country is principally muskeg. No grain has been grown, but a small quantity of potatoes has been cultivated. The circumstances of these Indians appear better than at Heart Lake, and I may mention here that the further north I went the better off I found the Indians, particularly in dress. They have no fisheries here in winter. The lake is about twenty-five miles from Portage La Loche and is about twenty-five miles long by twenty miles wide.

I found here that Staff Sergeant Hetherington had been severely strained in the back from a fall caused by slipping on a hill, and though suffering very much had not told me for fear of causing delay.

The night of the 16th January, before arriving here, was about the coldest we experienced on our trip, the thermometer registering 60° below zero, a high wind and

comparatively open country, it having been burnt off by the Indians some years before for the purpose of making a moose range, which is done by burning off the timber which encourages the second growth on which the moose feed.

On the 19th January we left Whitefish Lake at 11.30 a.m. arriving at Jackfish Lake at 4 p.m., making twelve miles, snowing hard and extremely cold.

There are five families of Half-breeds living here, they own no stock, but kill about 30,000 whitefish per annum which they sell to the Hudson's Bay Company, and traders on the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers. At this place I met Mr. McDermot, of the Hudson's Bay Company and left with him one of my dogs disabled (with frozen feet) which will be forwarded to Prince Albert. I also exchanged two dogs which were in low condition.

On the 20th January, we crossed an arm of Jackfish Lake and Swan Lake which is 15 miles long and 9 miles wide, the day was bitterly cold, we went to a fish cache and took 196 fish which I bought from one Cardinal the day before. Timber wolves are reported numerous in the neighbourhood of Swan Lake.

On the 21st January, we travelled about 18 miles having to make our own trail by sending a man ahead on snow shoes. The country is principally muskeg with jack pine, spruce, some birch and poplar, the weather was very cold and stormy. We arrived at McCallum's trading post on the Clearwater River in the afternoon, the approach to the river is very precipitous we being obliged to lower our sleds with ropes from tree to tree for a distance of about a mile. Here we found a ground fire which had been burning in the muskeg for nearly a year, and supposed to have been started by careless campers.

I met Mr. Spencer, who is in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort McMurray, en route to Jackfish Lake with horse sleds for a supply of fish, he sent his men on and returned with me to Fort McMurray the following day. I left notices *re* game, fire and poisons ordinances with McCallum. I heard of only one trapper on the Clearwater and also sent him notices, and was informed by both Spencer and McCallum, that he was not using poison.

After leaving McCallum's, Spencer started to break the trail on snow shoes the snow having drifted over his trail of previous day. We followed the Clearwater River making 4 portages, or short cuts through the woods from point to point of the river, these portages were rough and almost impassable owing to fallen timber. We were from 4 a.m until 6 p.m. making 20 miles to Fort McMurray, at which place the thermometer registered 48 degrees below zero, the storm continuing. One of our dogs played out and I was obliged to leave him in Mr. Spencer's charge.

The Clearwater River is from 200 to 300 yards wide, with high sloping banks, well timbered with spruce, tamarac, white poplar and birch suitable for building purposes, a larger and better quality of timber than I had yet seen. It is navigable, the Hudson's Bay Company having until late years used it as part of the route, via Carlton and Green Lake, by which they took their supplies into the far north and brought out their furs.

There is a clearing or prairie of about 500 acres, one mile and a half above this post, where the Hudson's Bay Company cut hay for the transport cattle used at Fort Smith, at least 100 tons can be cut there and a further supply of about 15 or 20 tons on an island close by. This place being the junction of the two rivers, and building timber and hay so easily obtained would be a suitable place for a police detachment. There are tar springs or wells on the east bank of the Athabasca extending for 50 miles.

I could not obtain any report of liquor being supplied or traded to Indians or others in this neighbourhood, and was informed that no poison was used for the destruction of fur-bearing animals, also from reports from the Hudson's Bay Company officials I understand that none was put out this winter in the vicinity of Grand Rapids and towards Athabasca Landing, and that no liquor was known of there, but the same officials reported both poison and liquor further down the river. I laid over one day to rest ourselves and the dogs.

There is no other settlement in this place, and the Hudson's Bay Company's supply of fish is brought from Jackfish Lake 55 miles distant, the few fish caught in the river

about the month of September not being sufficient even for the employees of the post. Roots and barley have been grown with success in small quantities.

On the 24th January we left Fort McMurray and travelled down the Athabasca River. The banks are sloping far back and well timbered with birch, white poplar and spruce of fair size for building purposes. Sandstone crops out on both banks for many miles. There was no track on the river and we still continued breaking one on snow shoes After travelling about fifteen miles we made camp on the east bank, some time after dark, the storm had moderated, but the cold was intense. The next day after dark we arrived at Little Red River, thirty-five miles distant from Fort McMurray, there is a settlement of nine families, consisting of half-breeds, Chippeweyans and Crees. The Hudson's Bay Company, Colin Fraser and the McClelland Bros., have trading posts there, the other inhabitants are hunters and trappers. I was informed that poison had been used there the previous winter in many cases, and the decrease in the fur supply was attributed to it. I explained the ordinances to the people, but before mentioning the liquor law I was asked by one Pische if nothing could be done towards preventing the trade in liquor and extracts, as there was too much of it. Sergeant Hetherington obtained information against Thomas McClelland for trading liquor and causing drunkenness in the Indian camps. I tried him, found him guilty and fined him $300 and costs, and in default six months' imprisonment with hard labour, the fine to be paid by the 1st of July next, or the imprisonment to be inflicted. I also tried an assault case, a man against his wife; this case I dismissed with a reprimand. The Indians requested that a chief might be appointed, and named Chrysostom Pische for that position. I explained that I had not power to make such an appointment, but would report upon the matter. He is a good hunter, shrewd, and I believe a reliable man for a leader and would be of use in giving information on matters relating to the poisons and liquor ordinances.

About fifteen miles above this point the Birch Mountains are in sight, where the last wood buffalo in this vicinity was killed last July by C. Pische. Four cows had been there for several years but no increase took place and they were gradually killed off.

On the 26th January we continued our journey down the Athabasca which appeared much the same as we had already passed through. The next day we met a party consisting of the Rev. Mr. Lucas and some Hudson Bay Company's officials with a packet going to Edmonton. The whole party, with the exception of Mr. Lucas, had their faces badly frozen, the thermometer registering 40 below zero. Their dog trains had beaten a fair track which helped us more or less for several days.

January 28th we camped at Poplar Point, after having passed many well wooded islands and a fine sulphur spring. Here I met five families and amongst them I saw Andrew Pische, a man of seventy-two years of age, a well known hunter, who told me that the buffalo in that vicinity had been exterminated. I was informed that no poison had been used there and they had not suffered from bush fires. Near this point there is a fishing lake where the Indians get a good supply of whitefish. There is also a trading post kept by one Gully who was then absent. For the last two days we saw numbers of ptarmigan, moose are also plentiful in the neighbourhood.

About 10 a.m. next day we called at Point Brule, where there are six families who live by hunting, amongst them Pierre Deroche, who was their spokesman. I explained the ordinances and gave them notices. The river was still dotted with islands which were as well as the banks thickly timbered. That night we camped on the bank of the river 14 miles below Point Brule, the weather still extremely cold.

January 30th. After following the Athabasca to the Embarras River, which was considerably flooded, under the snow, causing us at times serious delay in changing clothes and cleaning the sleds, we followed the Embarras for six miles and crossed a portage to Fallen Timber Creek. The timber, especially the tamarac on the Embarras River, was the largest and best we had so far seen, and is cut and towed by the Hudson's Bay Company's steamers to Lake Athabasca where it is made into lumber for boats and buildings.

January 31st, we made a portage to Lake Mamwee and crossed where it was 10 miles wide to the Quatre Fourch, which we followed for about three miles, meeting one

Alexis Torangeau, who gave information respecting a case of setting out poison, which I attended to later on. About four miles further on we struck Lake Athabasca and crossed a bay four miles wide, at the north west end of the lake, to Fraser's trading post, thence to the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Fort Chippeweyan, where I was met and most hospitably entertained by Dr. McKay, chief factor in charge of the Athabasca district.

Fort Chippeweyan is the headquarters' post of the district, and was established about the year 1789 by Sir Alexander Mackenzie. It is on the lake shore and comprises three large store houses, one of which is a depot for the Mackenzie and Peel River districts. There is a residence for the chief factor, also quarters for the clerks, a large recreation hall, offices, stables and some other buildings all inclosed by a stockade. The servants occupy a row of buildings outside the fort, and together number with the freemen, about 150 souls.

During the winter about 30 lodges of Chippeweyans and 12 of Crees live in the vicinity of the post, but about the 1st of June each year from 600 to 700 Indians and half-breeds come in to trade their furs.

The steamer "Grahame" 140 feet long, 28 feet beam, a stern wheeler and capable of carrying 150 tons of freight, but seldom loaded with more than 80 tons, and owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, makes this her headquarters and runs from Fort McMurray to Smith's Landing on the Great Slave River.

There is also established here a large Roman Catholic mission, presided over by Bishop Grouard, together with two priests, four lay brothers, four grey nuns and four lay sisters, it includes a boarding school containing at present 27 girls and 18 boys, clean and healthy looking children. This mission was established in 1848 by the late Archbishop Taché. They own a saw-mill, a steamboat 60 feet long, 9 feet beam, a side wheeler, which is used on the same route as the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer.

This mission consumes 22,000 fish between 1st November and 1st May, which are caught in Lake Athabasca. Their garden is the bed of a lake which they have drained; in this they grow 500 bushels of potatoes, but not always a sure crop. They also grow other vegetables and barley. Both the Hudson's Bay Company and the Mission keep a few horses for winter work, they also own a few cattle, but get their beef supply from Vermillion. The Bishop has a printing press and does his own printing and binding. He has printed books in six different languages.

Lake Athabasca is from 180 to 200 miles long, and averages about 20 miles in width. The shores are principally rocky, with the background wooded with spruce and jackpine. Here and there at a short distance from the lake are sloughs where a limited amount of hay is gathered.

At Fonde du Lac there is a settlement of about 400 mixed Chippeweyans and half-breed hunters who are reported in fair circumstances. But I regret to state that a large number of Indians, both Crees and Chippeweyans, living near Fort Chippeweyan are suffering from hunger on account of the small supply of furs, accounted for by the disappearance of rabbits, on which many of the fur-bearing animals live.

The Hudson's Bay Company and Mr. Colin Fraser, before my arrival, had advanced a certain amount of assistance to these starving people, some of whom died during my stay at Chippeweyan. I also gave a small amount of relief which is shown by vouchers attached to my report. On account of the severe weather, heavy trails and general hardships our dogs had undergone, I found they would be unable to stand a trip to Fort Resolution and back, and continue the proposed journey by Peace River, without a long rest. I therefore sent them with Sergeant Hetherington and the drivers to an island where they could be well fed and rested. He had also several cases to inquire into, which he did during my absence.

I hired two dog trains and proceeded on the 4th February towards Fort Resolution via Smith's Landing and Fort Smith on the Great Slave River. We travelled for two days with the thermometer ranging about 30° below, storming and snow drifting across a portage consisting of muskegs, small lakes and streams, burnt woods and a generally rough country, to the shore of Great Slave River nearly opposite the mouth of the Peace River.

The Great Slave River takes the waters of the Athabasca and Peace Rivers, also drains Lake Athabasca and is wide and deep, it has lower banks, and is wooded in the same way as the Athabasca.

It took us five days travelling along the river to go to Smith's Landing on account of having to break the trail the whole distance, there having been no travel during the winter. There is no settlement between Chippeweyan and Smith's Landing, which is at the head of a sixteen mile portage. There are twelve families at this place who live by fishing, hunting and trapping during the winter, and in summer are employed in transporting goods for the Hudson's Bay Company and traders over the portage to Fort Smith, which is at the foot of the rapids. These men are generally untrustworthy, as they make contracts and, when possible, break them, much to the annoyance and loss of their employers, and also steal anything they can. I found that poison had been used there and issued summonses. I was obliged to appoint a special constable to do this duty during my absence at Fort Resolution. The delinquents being then at a distance in the bush, trapping.

The portage is through bush, and a fair cart road has been made. This is the centre of the buffalo country, and on my arrival I found a party of hunters who had already made their long hunting snow shoes and were ready to start in search of buffalo, amongst them was Susa Beaulieu, a well known hunter. These people had never heard of a game law and were much surprised on hearing of it, but willingly gave up their hunt when I explained to them the necessity of complying with this law. There are three minor trading posts in this vicinity being out posts of the Hudson's Bay Company and C. Fraser.

At Smith's Landing, I first met some Indians called Cariboo Eaters, but looking very much like the Chippeweyans or Dogribs, they range from this place to Fort Resolution.

A very cold drive over the portage brought us to Fort Smith a small trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, managed by Mr. McKinley, and is a shipping point for the Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River, the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer "Wrigley" a screw boat plying there.

There is a river fishery at this place and a peculiar fish taken called "L'Inconnu," resembling a very large salmon, but strong, both in taste and smell, and oily and requiring education even for dogs to relish it.

Mr. McKinley and Mr. Hanbury, an English sportsman, who is on a hunting expedition had just returned from an unsuccessful buffalo hunt, but they saw fresh tracks and beds of about 60 buffalo, also the tracks of another small band of three bulls, probably old and driven out of the herd.

Poison had been used in this vicinity and two cases were brought before me and convictions obtained.

There are numerous small lakes in this district, well stocked with whitefish, pike, trout and suckers. Moose and wood cariboo also abound here, I saw the carcasses of eight hanging in the bush having been killed for Mr. McKinley's use.

The banks of the river here are low, the country is prairie and muskeg, with patches of bush composed of jackpine, spruce and poplar.

The Indians inhabiting the country along the Great Slave River from Smith's Landing to Fort Resolution are Chippeweyans, Cariboo Eaters and Yellow Knives, so called from having lived about the Copper Mine River, and in olden times fashioned their arrow heads and knives out of the metal supposed to have been found there. There is also a small band of Slavies, a few Crees and some half-breeds, chiefly composed of the Beaulieu family. Some of the Indians are said to journey all the way to Edmonton in the spring to trade their furs, and return with whisky which they smuggle through for themselves and other Indians who intrust them with furs to take out for the same purpose. The names of some of them have been forwarded by me in a former report.

I remained at Fort Smith until the following morning, 10th February, and started for Fort Resolution having secured the services of a guide, and here I may mention that the Indians in the vicinity, hardly ever move from their homes, excepting to visit

their lines of traps. I understand that this has been the custom for generations and there are many old Indians hereabouts who have not been even to Chippeweyan, which might be styled the metropolis of the district. I found this to be the custom of many of the northern Indians up to and along the Peace River. They have no ambition and little knowledge of the outer world, and as long as they have enough to fill themselves with they are happy. I found it, not only unpleasant but impossible to enter the houses of the Indians who live on the unknown fish, owing to the stench.

Ten miles from Fort Smith we came to Gravel Point, where there are several families of Caribou Eaters, who were at the time living entirely on fish, without either bread or vegetables, the weather being so severe that they would not hunt moose, although plentiful in the neighbourhood.

Poison had been used there, but I was unable to interview the man who used it, he being away many days travelling the woods trapping near the mouth of Salt River. There is a winter fishery on the Slave River, and two houses on the west bank, both vacant, as the owners had "pitched off." Salt River empties into the Great Slave River about 25 miles below Fort Smith, the water is too salt for use, and the supply of salt for the district is gathered on the banks of the stream, where beds are formed by natural evaporation, it is coarse and darker in colour than ordinary table salt, it is also shipped to the Peace River district, where it is sold at 25 cents per pound, and to the Mackenzie and Peel River districts, and in fact to the Arctic Circle. The wood buffalo make this point the middle of their range, probably on account of the salt licks. One band ranging from Peace Point to Salt River, the other band from the latter place to about 20 miles from Great Slave Lake. These bands are said to keep separate and never cross the Salt River.

Three buffalo of the Peace Point band, then numbering 33 head, were killed about the end of November last. (See further notice in my report on buffalo.

On the 11th February we met Rev. Mr. Marsh, of Hay River, and Frank Mobley, a trapper from Beaver River, on their way out of the north country.

On our arrival at the portage of the Grande Detour we found a white man named C. Charlston, a United States ex-soldier, in a starving condition, having been deserted by his Indian companions who had "pitched off" on a buffalo hunt. I gave him provisions to enable him to reach Fort Smith. From after reports I believe this man to be of unsound mind and unable to take care of himself, he is said to be a fugitive from justice. I arranged with Mr. McKinley to give him sufficient assistance to sustain life until spring, and now suggest that as soon as possible he should be removed to an asylum.

After about two miles of portage and 8 miles on the Great Slave River without a trail, we struck a hunter's shack, occupied by Campbell Young and George Martin, who reported a successful take of fur, and stated that they had not used poison bait this year, though acknowledging to having used it during the previous winter, and seen the evil effect thereof by the decrease of fur. On the trail next day, the 12th February, we found what we supposed to be a dog, but turned out to be a cayote, a very unusual animal to see in that country, it had been poisoned. After tracing its tracks to the poisoned bait, we were enabled to discover the party who had laid out the poison, who was afterwards fined for that offence. At my first interview with John Trindle, the offender, he not knowing that I was a police official, mistook me for Mr. Warbuton Pike, who had been there hunting buffalo and musk ox. He was much surprised on my return to find that I had received information against him, and would try him at Fort Smith.

The banks of the river are higher and have been well wooded but are now burnt. The overflows and drifted tracks gave us hard work. The trip to Resolution was not all the way by the river, as there is a bend which would take 90 miles to follow, but a portage or short cut of 24 miles saves this long round. This portage has been cleared through burnt timber, but on account of the depth of snow it was impossible for me to examine and report upon the soil. At the end of the portage after descending a gradual slope we came in view of the Great Slave Lake, which with the exception of some islands in the distance, could be taken for a vast frozen ocean. We crossed a bay

about 5 miles wide and arrived at Fort Resolution on Sunday, 13th February at 3.30 p.m. which ended my northern journey.

This Hudson's Bay Company's Fort is built on the shore of the lake, is stockaded and contains several neat buildings, it is not as large as Chippewepan, though an important trading post in charge of Mr. C. F. Gaudet. There is also a trading post belonging to Nagle and Hislop who have another at Stony Island 20 miles distant on the lake. There is a Roman Catholic Mission and a day school managed by two priests. The mission owns a side wheel steamer which crosses the Great Slave Lake and carries supplies to the Missions at the Peel and Mackenzie Rivers. The church is built of logs and is 60 x 30 feet, four lay brothers are employed by the mission.

Through the winter the population consists of only about 108 souls, in the summer like at Chippeweyan, it increases to 600 or 700. This may be called the land of plenty as regards meat and fish, the cariboo being very numerous this year, the lake trout are of great size, very plentiful and of fine flavour. I met a number of Indians here, —Dogribs, Yellowknives and Slavies who came in to trade their furs and get their outfit to enable them to go to the Barren Grounds after musk ox.

The Rev. Father Duprie, who is in charge of the Great Slave Lake Mission, informed me that the whalers, mostly Americans, who traded with the Eskimos and other Indians of the far north (along the Mackenzie River and at the I chel Islands), deal principally in liquor, no duty being paid on goods or liquor. The women are debauched, and drunken sailors frequently shoot the Indians. Whalers often winter there, sometimes as many as twenty vessels. Poison bait is said to be used also.

After resting the dogs and gathering what information was possible, I started on the 17th February on my return journey to Fort Smith. Information having been laid against John Trindle for setting out poison I took him with me to that post, by pressing forward I was enabled to make the trip in three days having the benefit of my old trail.

Arriving at Fort Smith at 9 p.m. on the 20th February I remained there over Sunday, and the next day tried Trindle and W. Brown, an interpreter to the Hudson's Bay Company. They both pleaded "guilty" and were fined $25 and costs.

On Sunday, Father Dischambeneal, the priest in charge at Fort Smith, who had been visiting the Indians, was brought in by them in a dying condition. I proceeded to Smith's Landing, where I tried Charles Sanderson for putting out poison, he having been brought in by my special constables, he also pleaded guilty and was fined $25 and costs. After the trial, during which time my driver was busy baking bread and making ready, we proceeded on our trip and late at night we camped at Cariboo Island.

The next day we got to La Butte, within 50 miles of Chippeweyan, from here I sent one of my dog drivers ahead with instructions to Sergeant Hetherington to get back the dogs from the island and to notify the bishop of the illness of the priest at Fort Smith. Being calm and clear the thermometer at —32°, I decided to press on and drive all night, which we did with the exception of the short halts, or as called here "spells," during which time the kettle was boiled and a cup of tea and a bit of bannock hastily consumed and much enjoyed.

The following day shortly before arriving at Chippewepan, I met Bishop Grouard on his way to visit the sick priest already mentioned.

The 25th February, on my arrival at Chippeweyan, I found that Sergeant Hetherington had not been idle, he had a number of cases to lay before me, and I have much pleasure in reporting that he deserves much credit for the way he handled them. These cases which are noted and attached, occupied my time from the 26th February to the 3rd March, and the next day I started on my Peace River expedition.

At Chippeweyan I was obliged to purchase two dogs, one of ours having died, another being unfit for duty.

By advice of Chief Factor Dr. McKay, the weather being still stormy and unsettled and the carriers of the Peace River packet having been lost for several days, I hired a guide to pilot our party over the end of Lake Athabasca, the Quatre Fouche or Delta of the Peace River, and portages consisting of streams, marshes and lakes, viz.: Mamwee and Lake Claire, the latter where we crossed, being 40 miles wide. I here dispensed with the pilot and continued on the portage which is through muskeg

and patches of prairie alternating with brule or burnt bush, composed of all the northern timbers.

On the night of the 7th of March at dusk, we came in sight of the valley of the Peace River, and in the distance the Deer or Cariboo Mountains. The snow through this portage was 30 inches deep, still cold, ranging between 25° and 30° below zero. On this portage we came across a fire place, in which we found the remains of buffalo horns, probably lately killed, this place not being far from the range of the wood buffalo.

On leaving Lake Claire and entering the portage, we saw several rifles and ammunition bags suspended on tripods, supposed to belong to starving Indians, who were making for the Birch River, where they could catch fish.

The precipitous approach to the Peace River, obliged us, as at the Clearwater, to lower our sleds by ropes to the flat or marsh adjoining the river bed. The banks are generally wooded with large spruce and poplar, a great quantity of this timber falling into the river, is washed down by the high water and ice jambs, and is recovered and utilized for building purposes as far as Fort Resolution, which has been built mainly from this source of supply.

After a few miles travel on the Peace, we struck the Swan River, which we followed up to where there had been a portage, now washed out and become a branch of the Swan emptying into the Peace River, it puzzled our guide to such an extent that we were lost for some hours, after finding a portage we proceeded on our trip through deep snow, and camped on the Peace River at Big Island portage. The river here is so large that it looked to me more like a lake, the storm was so blinding I could not estimate its width.

Following up the Peace we overtook three Cree Indians who were travelling from Deer Mountain to the Little Red River, a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company. They had left several fires burning and, on account of the danger of setting fire to the muskeg which it is nearly impossible to quench, and is liable to break out in the spring and cause serious damage to timber, information having been laid before me I, on my arrival at the Hudson's Bay Company's Post at Little Red River, on the 10th of March, imposed a fine of $25 on each of them, as an example, and towards preventing further infracion of the law.

This post is at the head of steamboat navigation on the Peace River, several chutes or impassable rapids being there. The freighting of supplies and return of furs above this point is done by row boats, known as the Hudson's Bay Company's York boats.

On the 11th March I met the Rev. Mr. Scott above the second or upper chute, and mentioned having fined Indians for leaving fires burning: further on, to my surprise I found that he had left his fire in exactly the same condition. I was unable to pursue him being so pressed for time to finish my journey before the breaking up of the rivers, and regret exceedingly that I was unable to do so as his punishment would have been even a better object lesson than that inflicted on the Indians.

We camped that night at the Loon River, the thermometer registering 50° below zero, here a Cree half-breed resided who had been reported to me as having used poisoned bait, thereby killing an Indian train dog. I may mention that the Indian train dog is frequently used as a pack or draft animal, as well as a retriever or hunting dog, and is invaluable to his owner. The above mentioned half-breed had "pitched off" and no tracks being visible about his house I was unable to follow him. The 12th—after following the river some distance and making a three mile portage we arrived at E. J. Lawrence's winter ranch containing 60 head of grade Durham cattle which are dehorned, also 35 horses. It is said to be the most northerly ranch in America.

After leaving this ranch and following a waggon road on the portage through ten miles of bush, prairie and swamp, and having crossed the Peace River we arrived at Fort Vermillion which is the principal post of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Peace, although attached to Athabasca district, Mr. F. D. Wilson being the official in charge.

It varies from most of the Hudson's Bay Company's posts, not being inclosed, it is well located and neatly kept. There is a settlement including the Hudson's Bay Company, of 168 people: they own 159 horses, 297 cattle and 54 swine, this includes the belongings of the two missions, viz.: Church of England and Roman Catholic.

The Church of England has a church, a day and boarding school with ten scholars. It is situated about two miles below the Hudson's Bay post on the bank of the river and is in charge of the Rev. Mr. Scott, assisted by another clergyman.

The Roman Catholic mission which is situated a quarter of a mile above Vermillion is managed by Father Jaussard, assisted by Father Dupin and two lay brothers, they have a school with four girls and two boys as day scholars, thirteen girls and twenty boys as boarders. They cultivate thirty acres and grow potatoes and other vegetables, also barley and wheat successfully, have a grist-mill which grinds about eighty bags of wheat per annum, and quite a collection of farm implements, including wagons, &c. The present church being too small for the congregation is to be enlarged, and the material to build one 55 x 22 is on the ground.

On the opposite or north bank two traders have located, namely, F. Brick and Twelve-Foot Davis, an American. The Lawrence Bros. have separate farms of about 130 acres each under cultivation, only having lost one crop during the last seventeen years. I procured samples of wheat, barley and oats which I handed to you. E. J. Lawrence owns a grist and saw-mill with a twelve horse power engine, also a steam thresher, a self binder, gang ploughs and other farm implements.

The country is wooded with small timber, and the open places or patches of prairie are about sufficient for the present inhabitants. The soil is reported good, plenty of hay can be made in the immediate vicinity. Being beyond the large fisheries, and moose very plentiful, the inhabitants live principally on them, with other game and a limited amount of domestic cattle, though of inferior grade, probably caused by in and in breeding, but they are much valued and their owners appeared ambitious to raise fair sized herds.

This is about the centre of the range of the Beaver Indians, who are more like the Wood Crees than the northern or fishing tribes. I noticed the half-breeds of this settlement, and continuing up the river, were more intelligent and civilized than those in the lake districts. Here Sergeant Hetherington laid information against Isaac Gagnon, Dan Carey, Amedie (Indian) and Pruden Demore, also an Indian lad named Alfred Atlaw (who had just completed his education at the Church of England Mission School). The boy was allowed to go under suspended sentence. The others were all convicted and fined $25 each. Later on I learned that Carey had, through his carelessness, narrowly escaped poisoning a number of Indians, but succeeded in killing five of their hunting dogs, thereby obliging the Indians to draw in their sleds containing their furs and other belongings, also that Gagnon had distributed 120 poisoned baits along the river bank.

I beg here to mention the satisfactory and zealous manner in which Sergeant Hetherington investigated and prosecuted these cases, and attach his report *re* the sudden death of one Bertrand.

It was my intention to comply with the instructions of the commissioner, if possible, to proceed from this point via Trout Lake and Wapiscaw and thence along the Athabasca. I found this impracticable, the country being nearly unknown, but supposed to be through heavy bush and muskeg. I could not obtain a guide and was obliged to change my proposed route to that by Lesser Slave Lake.

I received at Vermillion information that one Clement Paul was setting out poison by which Indian dogs had been destroyed, and having secured a guide proceeded on the 16th March towards his location. After travelling for four days through the woods towards Keg River and in the vicinity of Head Mountain I found that he was visiting his line of traps along the Hay River about 10 days' journey off, and had already been two days on the way. I could not obtain dog feed, and therefore did not follow him, information was laid and later on he can be dealt with.

This trip, westward, and in the vicinity of the Peace River was mostly through burnt and fallen timber, which evidently had been of good quality. The soil is reported good The approach to the river is very steep. The climate is reported milder than lower down, and the nearer the Rocky Mountains the milder it is said to be.

We did not experience a change until the 23rd of March, when we encountered a Chinook wind which reminded me of my home at Fort Macleod. The 20th March we crossed the Peace River at Buffalo River point, where there are two families, one of

half-breeds and one of Indians, numbering 12 people owning eight head of cattle and two horses. This is the Indian (Suza-Kwa-Kae-him), who had the dog poisoned by Clement Paul.

We again crossed the Peace River into a portage leading to Wolverine Point, where we met a mixed settlement of Indians and half-breeds, and where there is a Hudson's Bay Company outpost. The population consists of 11 males and 14 females owning 21 head of cattle and four horses, they up to my arrival had killed 51 moose, They do no farming.

On the 21st we followed along the river to Long Point Portage where we camped for the night. On the following morning after having gone about two miles we arrived at two hunter's shacks, and were informed of the placing out of poison by Lawrence Aubray, who lives at Big Point, some distance up the river, and Martin Ouilette of Keg River, a place we had already passed. These men were summonsed, convicted and fined $25 and costs.

The timber along the river and through the back country for a great distance has been destroyed, and reported to have been purposely done by one Ouzzey, who was driving cattle for E. J. Lawrence in the summer of 1895, and is at present residing at Vermillion. An enormous amount of damage has been done, the fire having jumped the river in many places, making a clean sweep of everything inflammable on both sides.

Moose and bear are plentiful, but the latter in low condition on account of their usual food consisting of berries, being destroyed by these fires,

Bear in this district have not generally hibernated this year as is their custom, presumably on account of their poor condition. In some cases they have destroyed each other, probably being in a starving condition.

On the evening of the 22nd March before our arrival at the Hudson's Bay Company outpost at Battle River we encountered the Chinook already referred to, and from that time, were obliged to haul mostly at night, the snow being too wet and soft for the dogs to make much headway during the day time. We laid over here for a day partly to rest the dogs and partly on account of the thaw as well as for the purpose of obtaining moose meat, finding it necessary to do so the dogs not thriving on the horse meat we had obtained at Vermillion.

The Hudson's Bay Company trader, as well as Mr. Ferguson, handle a large number of valuable furs.

On the 25th March we started at 3.30 a.m., and covered about 28 miles, the whole distance being on the river. We made camp at 8 p.m., and meeting some Cree Indians who had been visiting their traps, obtained several lynx, which are said, all over this district, to be unusually fat, this being a strange fact, rabbits, on which they principally live, having disappeared. The next day, the weather varying from a snow storm, cold north wind, to a chinook, we arrived at Cadotte River, a stream emptying into the Peace. When passing Moberly Point we visited some 26 people living there, composed of Lesser Slave Lake half-breeds and Indians, they have three houses which they make their head-quarters during hunting expeditions.

On the 27th March at 3 a.m. we left camp, a warm wind having caused a rapid thaw, we had an unpleasant trip to Tar Island. Here we found a cross fox secured in a spring trap, and some of our dogs having been at one time used as hunters forgot that they were in harness, and making for the fox caused a general demoralization of our column, of which I took a photograph.

The banks of the river are very high, covered with small cotton wood and poplar with a few spruce, outcroppings of limestone frequently occur.

Next morning, 28th March, we passed a natural gas well which must be large, though situated about the entry of the river it makes a rumbling noise which is plainly heard on the shore. We passed the Hudson's Bay Company's crossing and their depot at the end of Lesser Slave Lake Portage, arrived at the Smoky River trading post managed by Mr. F. J. H. Bedson of the Hudson's Bay Company. This post has been established just one hundred years. Mr. McKenzie, late of the Hudson's Bay Company, is settled here, and owns a water power grist-mill, but does little or nothing with it. Farming has been successfully carried on for several years.

The Roman Catholic Mission, which is four miles above the Hudson's Bay Company's post, has four hundred acres fenced and 30 under cultivation, grows wheat, barley, oats, and various vegetables. They have a neat church, 45 x 25, a mission house, 39 x 23, a separate dining-room and kitchen, 35 x 20, workshop, 35 x 20, milk house, 18 x 16, three buildings for stock, a large barn and store-houses. The lumber for these buildings was cut in the bush, whip-sawn, and shingles made personally by the Rev. Father Husson, who will shortly erect buildings for a convent, the material being ready.

The Brick Bros. have a trading post about four miles distant and appear to be doing a fair business. One mile still further on is the "Shaftsbury" Church of England Mission in charge of Rev. Mr. Robertson, who was absent during my visit. I neither saw nor heard of any school or school children there, and by the general appearance of the property I should judge that little success has been met with.

Having received information relating to poison at several places higher up the river, I secured a team of horses, as the thaw made travelling too difficult for dogs, to go to Dunvagen and the Clearwater River, but when within a day's travel of Dunvagen was obliged to turn back, the river being unsafe. Two brothers named McCoy (Americans) living about the boundary line of British Columbia, I was informed, had, this season, poisoned more than 70 foxes. I also heard of poisoned bait at Spirit River 15 miles from Dunvagan, and at Grand Prairie, 25 miles beyoud that place, where both whiskey and poison were in general use. This place is reported to be quite an extensive settlement of Red River half-breeds and Indians, and I regretted my inability to interview and deal out justice to these people.

On the 31st March we started, accompanied by Mr. Bedson, who was travelling to Lesser Slave Lake for the purpose of leaving his dogs at their summer quarters, and assisted us by carrying part of our loads, and made about 35 miles along the Lesser Slave Lake Portage where we camped at Little Prairie. The trail was slushy though there is a good waggon road through fair sized poplar to Lesser Slave Lake, a distance of about 90 miles from the Peace River. I arrived at the Hudson's Bay post there late on the 1st April, and was joined next day by Sergeant Hetherington. This post has been established for many years and is the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company in Peace River district. There is a large residence for the chief factor, buildings for clerks and servants quarters, together with store houses and stables. It is situated on a bay of Lesser Slave Lake. Cattle and horses are kept here for the purpose of freighting across the portage.

This place is well known for its excellent shooting grounds, duck and geese abound, of which at least 1,500 duck and 500 geese are killed each spring and fall for the use of the post. There is also a fishery where 110,000 fish in the fall, and 10,000 in the summer are killed for the settlement including the Roman Catholic Mission. These are whitefish, lake trout, pike, pickerel and suckers. There is a large and flourishing Roman Catholic Mission and school, the convent is 72 feet long by 28 wide and two and a-half storys high, also a Church of England Mission, both of which I visited. I heard from Chief Factor Ewen Macdonald, who had just received a letter from St. John stating that many Indians were starving there and at Grand Prairie, at which place they had eaten 25 horses.

This destitution was caused by the heavy bush fires last year driving the moose and other animals to the lower parts of Peace River and also the scarcity of rabbits, consequently preventing the Indians from "pitching off" in their starving state, and thereby capturing little or no fur. It was my intention, if possible, to go from here to Trout Lake, Wapiscaw and Grand Rapids, but I was strongly advised by Mr. Macdonald, not to make the attempt, and on the 5th of April, on account of the thorough thaw and general break up, I found all I could do to make my way down Lesser Slave Lake and River a distance of about 170 miles, and I followed the Athabasca for about 90 miles to Athabasca Landing. The timber along the Lesser Slave River is burnt off in many places as is the case also on the Athabasca, the upper part of which is very similar to the parts I had travelled over at its northern or lower extremity. I arrived at Athabasca Landing on the 12th April. I found the snow had entirely disappeared and the roads dry rendering it impossible for the dogs to draw their loads, and having

received information of poison being used near the trail in the vicinity of Pot Lake, I hired a freighter to draw us to Fort Saskatchewan, and visited Pot Lake, summonsed and convicted one William Kipple-White for using poison and fined him $50 and costs for that offence.

We arrived at Fort Saskatchewan on the 15th April and crossed the Saskatchewan River on the ice, which broke up and moved out at midnight. We here completed a round trip of more than 2,000 miles without accident of any serious nature, the whole party being in good health and the dogs in fair condition.

In case of further winter work being required in the district which I have patrolled, I recommend that the Northern or Mackenzie River snow shoe, and native made moose skin mocassins should be provided as the police issue of mocassins become so slippery that they are dangerous and useless for this style of travelling. Flat sleds and carrioles slightly narrower than those provided, and of thoroughly seasoned and properly grained oak, and for spring work light steel shoeing with countersunk bolts. Cariboo capotes are found to be the lightest, warmest and cheapest dress for winter work.

Should dogs be required they can be obtained at Lesser Slave Lake in exchange for cast horses from this post.

I do not wish to conclude my report without again mentioning the efficient manner in which Sergeant Hetherington assisted me in carrying out my duties. I also recommend to your favourable notice, guide and interpreter, James Gullion, who proved himself a good dog driver, willing about a camp and a trustworthy interpreter.

Accompanying this report you will find my supplementary report and map, together with vouchers and schedule of cases disposed of by me.

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your obedient servant,

A. M. JARVIS, *Inspector*,
In charge of Northern Patrol.

The Officer Commanding
N. W. M. Police,
Fort Saskatchewan District.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

SIR,—I have the honour to state that in compliance with instructions contained in the commissioner's letter dated 21st December, 1896, I have made a general report of my trip to Great Slave Lake and other points in the northern territory. This report which was taken from my diary touches on the greater number of subjects required of me to be reported upon, but I think it advisable to deal with each matter separately and, therefore, add this supplementary report.

Re USE AND ABUSE OF LIQUOR.

On what may be called the Lower Athabasca, and from Fort McMurray to Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake, there can be no doubt from reliable information collected by this expedition, that considerable quantities of spirits and extracts are smuggled in and given and traded to the Indians, and also brought in by Indians or half-breed hunters who trade their fur in the Edmonton district and purchase liquor.

As is well known liquor to Indians is their ruin, and as long as they can procure any they will hang around the neighbourhood of these trading posts, get cheated out of their fur, and when obliged to go on another hunt, they and their families are in a miserable condition and half starved. It is reported that at several places in the vicinity of Great Slave Lake, and especially on an island 20 miles out in the lake, an intoxicating

mixture is made which is called beer, it is said to be composed of hops, yeast cake, sugar, flour, tobacco and spirituous extracts. I could hear of no liquor along the Peace River, except at the settlement at Grand Prairie referred to in my report. This place as already stated I was unable to visit and, therefore, can only report on hear say. One Rivet is said to be the principal offender. At Lesser Slave Lake from the reports of the Rev. Mr. White and others there is a large consumption of liquor, making for the greater part of the winter as stated to me "one big drunk," and rendering the nights hideous. I there saw a large number of extract of ginger bottles (empty) said to have been brought in and traded by one La Riviere, a wealthy free trader, who has been for many years in the North-west Territory and the United States, where he was reported in trouble for whisky trading with Indians. Permits are said to be fradulently obtained by traders and others in the name of the boatmen and employees who are in a great measure paid for their summer's work in liquor. The liquor smuggled to Lesser Slave Lake is said to be carried in by the old and now seldom travelled trail via Jaspar Pass, Lac La Nonne and old Fort Assiniboine.

SETTING OUT POISON.

There has been in many locations on the Lower Athabasca and Great Slave Lake country, as well as the upper districts of the Peace River, a general use of poisoned bait, many of those using it not being aware of the law. Some damage has been done, principally by the destruction of Indian hunting dogs, which are valuable to their owners, and also a great loss of fur takes place by poisoned animals wandering off when poisoned, and are either consumed by other animals, or covered in snow drifts, and are also dangerous to hungry Indians who may discover and eat the poisoned carcasses.

Indians complained bitterly of the use of this poison put out by white men and half-breed trappers with whom they are unable to compete, and think it hard that people who are not owners of the country are allowed to rob them of their living. I notified all I could by word of mouth, and sent printed notices to many others relating to the ordinances. I tried and fined a number for breaking the law, and trust that these lessons may for a time prevent further infringement thereof. Time has been allowed for the payment of these fines, which when due should be enforced, otherwise the trouble and expense of the expedition will have been encountered uselessly, and will be a bad precedent for further action in that country.

BUSH FIRES.

Travellers of all kinds, including missionaries of all denominations, traders and Hudson's Bay Company's servants are most careless. They camp along river banks and leave fires burning, which frequently spread and destroy timber for miles. Enormous damage has been done, and on the Upper Peace River these vast fires have driven off the game and consequently impoverished many of the Indians. I imposed fines on several persons who had neglected to comply with the provisions of the fire ordinance. I found that the Indians are not entirely innocent of this law breaking, as they are known to burn off moose ranges and consequently large tracts of country.

FISHERIES.

Nearly all the small lakes are stocked with fish, but in some an insect cuts the nets in a very short space of time and renders fishing impossible.

There are large fisheries at Lake Athabasca, Great and Lesser Slave Lakes, and on Great Slave River. Whitefish and lake trout of a very fine quality are taken, together with pike, pickerel and suckers, and on Great Slave River the L'Inconnu or unknown fish, as mentioned in my report; this fish can be eaten by Indians and possibly by whitemen after being educated to their flavour, both in taste and smell.

There are both winter and summer fisheries at nearly all these places computed as follows, viz:—

	Fish.
Heart Lake	1,500
Little Jackfish Lake	15,000
Whitefish Lake	30,000
Lake Athabasca	300,000
River at Fort Smith (L'Inconnu)	10,000
Poplar Point Lakes	5,000
Great Slave Lake, for Fort Resolution and Mission	15,000
Lesser Slave Lake	120,000
Total	496,500

This being as close an estimate as I could make, though the supply is unlimited.
N.B.—The principal fishing is done during the spawning season.

TIMBER, SETTLEMENT AND HAY.

Having principally travelled along the rivers, I could not inspect much of the back country. I did not see any very large timber on any part of the journey. About the best was on the Embarrass and the Lower Peace Rivers, as already stated large tracts have been destroyed by fires. There is a large amount of cottonwood and poplar of fair proportions and sufficient for the supply of building timber and fuel for the inhabitants, and excepting upon the Upper Peace River, I did not see much land fit for farming purposes.

Hay can be cut in limited quantities at nearly every small settlement, as well as at Hudson's Bay Company's posts. At Lesser Slave Lake there is any amount to be obtained at a small cost.

DECREASE OF FUR, GAME AND *re* BUFFALO.

As reported under the head of poisons, a certain decrease in the fur-bearing animals has taken place, which may further be attributed to the disappearance of their principal food, viz.: rabbits, which increase for about seven years and cover the timbered part of Alberta and the northern country. They are followed by most of the carniverous fur-bearing animals which are then plenty. A throat disease attacks the rabbits, killing them off, and thence causing the migration and consequent scarcity of these animals.

I have taken great pains in making as thorough inquiries as possible in connection with the wood buffalo, their habits, number and range, and in conversation with old residents and hunters learned that large numbers roamed over the country in former years, and about 30 years ago 200 head working towards the Birch Mountains, on crossing Lake Claire, broke through the ice and were drowned, their carcasses having been seen the following spring, also some few years ago deep snow with a crust enabled the hunters to slaughter the whole of a herd numbering 50.

Since that time the scattered bands probably not being more than 300 strong, have had a better chance for their lives, and comparatively few have been killed, they being extremely shy and hard to approach. These are hunted by people, stating their ignorance of the law protecting game, and pretending they never heard of it. A party who had prepared their outfit for a buffalo hunt, when told by me of the necessity of complying with the law, cheerfully desisted and postponed their hunt, at any rate during my stay in the country.

The range of these animals is from Peace Point to Salt River, and from Salt River to within 20 miles of Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake. I have mentioned to and from Salt River, as these bands do not mingle, nor do either of them cross their boundary.

Hanbury and McKinley saw tracks and beds of 60 head on 1st February, 1897. On the 20th February two bulls and a cow were seen 25 miles from Fort Smith, belonging to the Peace Point band. Three, out of a band of 38, also of the Peace Point herd were

killed in November last, and these are supposed to be members detached from the main band, making 98 known to be in that vicinity. A small band of 9 head protected by the Indians is supposed to range in British Columbia, near the source of Liard River. Mr. McKinley, of the Hudson's Bay Company, informs me that after the first fall of snow in the autumn, a close estimate of the numbers could be made by riding through the country, taking pack horses to carry provisions. Mr. Hanbury intends returning this year, and the fear of a $200 fine will hardly prevent his hunt. Should it be the intention of the government to protect these nearly extinct animals, it can only be done by placing officials on the spot.

I have, in the case of buffalo as well as other game, impressed on all hunters and other interested persons the necessity of obeying the Game Act, and have left printed notices where practicable.

BEAR.

On the upper part of the Peace River, over 300 bears are killed annually for food, and being out of season their fur is of little or no value.

BEAVER.

Beaver are decreasing in numbers all over the North-west Territories as is well known, but at Vermillion and Great Slave Lake this is said to be reversed, as the supply of skins is on the increase. I could find no truth in the report that kit beaver were sold at the same price as full grown ones, though in many instances, hunters kill large and small together, as well for food as fur. This practice is said to have come into use since the arrival in the country of Saulteaux Indians and eastern half-breeds. This indiscriminate slaughter is not encouraged by traders or Hudson's Bay officials.

MUSK OX.

Musk Ox range in the Barren Grounds, north and east of the country I visited. They are quite numerous, but their range being so extensive it is impossible to estimate their numbers. Cows have been killed and their skins as well as their unborn offspring sold at Fort Rae and along the McKenzie, at Providence, Good Hope and other places, but only 18 were brought to Resolution this year. Many hunters have been furnished by the Hudson's Bay Company and other traders with supplies to enable them to make their winter hunt, and if successful will bring out robes and unknowingly break the law. This unborn fur being very handsome is in great demand, and the protection of the musk ox as well as all other game in this district requires resident guardians.

POLICE POSTS.

I recommend a detachment to be stationed on, and patrol the Lower Athabasca, making Chippeweyan their headquarters. This patrol could only be done by boat in summer, and dog train in winter. A detachment on their summer patrol could easily build stopping places and fish depots at convenient places, say 25 miles apart. These buildings would cost little or nothing, and fish got by contract would also be cheap. I should recommend Little Red River as an outpost, it being a trading point with a considerable population.

At Lesser Slave Lake the Hudson's Bay Company have buildings suitable for a detachment, some of which I am informed could be rented. Horses could be used across the 90 mile portage to Peace and Smoky Rivers. In a former part of my report I have mentioned the drunkennes in this district. Police from here could visit Smoky River, the upper part of Peace River, and the—now said to be large—settlement of eastern half-breeds at Grand Prairie. In the vicinity of this post the population consists of 280 males and 283 females, and probably a like number settled around the

lake. There are several free traders who have establishments here as well as outposts at convenient places near the lake, amongst them Dejarlais and LaRiviere. At this place and Lake Athabasca the women are reported to be very immoral.

MURDERS.

Indians of unsound mind, styled "We'h-ti-koo," and reported to become cannibals, are frequently made away with to prevent them from killing and eating other members of their family or tribe. These occurrences caused the reports of alleged murders. I was unable to locate any recent practice of this, but the nuns at Lesser Slave Lake had rescued some young girls from the threatened fate, and the Rev. Mr. White took charge of a young man who was rapidly becoming "We'h ti-koo," and would soon have been killed by his own tribe.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

A. M. JARVIS, *Inspector,*
In charge of Northern Patrol.

The Officer Commanding,
N.W. Mounted Police,
Fort Saskatchewan.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE,
FORT VERMILLION, 14th March, 1897.

Re DEATH OF BERTRAND.

SIR,—I have the honour to state that, in accordance with the instructions received from you, I made inquiries *re* the man Bertrand, who died suddenly at this place last winter, and from what I can learn there is no evidence whatever of foul play in the case.

I saw W. Lambert, C. Lezotte, W. Gray and Jean Lezotte, all of whom were present at the spree held on the night of Bertrand's death. These men say that Bertrand was very drunk and was put to bed by C. Lezotte and W. Lambert, and was found dead in the morning. There was no fighting or violence used towards Bertrand, who was known to be in ill-health, and was spitting blood for some months before his death.

The general opinion in the settlement is that Bertrand died from an over dose of liquor, which was stolen by him from F. Brick's store. Trader Brick is away from his place trading at Keg River, but his statement can be taken in June, when he is expected at Athabasca Landing.

I also saw the Rev. Mr. Scott, of Fort Vermillion, whose statement I took and forwarded to Fort Saskatchewan in June last, and he corroborated his former statement.

Permits for twelve gallons of liquor for Messrs. Brick Bros., traders, were cancelled by me at Athabasca Landing about August, 1895.

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your obedient servant,

S. HETHERINGTON,
S. Serjeant.

To Inspector JARVIS,
Commanding Northern Patrol.

"G" DIVISION—NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE—(Fort Saskatchewan).

Returns of Proceedings had by Inspector A. M. Jarvis on the Patrol made to the Arthabaska, Peace River and Great Slave Lake Districts, 1897.

Prosecutor.	Defendant.	Crime.	Date of Hearing.	Penalty.	Time when paid or to be paid.	Place of Conviction.	Remarks.
			1897.				
Regina	T. McClelland	Giving liquor to Indians.	Jan. 26	$300.00 and costs	July 1, 1897	Little Red River	To be collected.
— Lacorde	Emily Lacorde	Assault	do 18	Dismissed		Little Jackfish Lake.	Domestic quarrel.
M. E. Pische	Mary Pische	do	do 26	do		Little Red River	do
Regina	Wm. Brown	Putting out poison	Feb. 22	$25.00 and costs or 1 month h. l.	July 1, 1897	Fort Smith	To be collected.
do	J. Trindle	do	do 22	do do	do	do	do
do	C. Sanderson	do	do 22	do do	do	Smith's Landing	do
do	J. Bird	do	do 26	do do	do	Fort Chipeweyan	do
do	A. Tarrongeur	do	Mar. 3	Dismissed		do	Insufficient evidence.
do	Pierre Tarrongeur.	Killing a horse	do 3	do		do	do
do	Isadore Villbrun	do	do 3	Allowed to go on suspended sentence.		do	Juvenile offender.
do	Pane (Cree Indian)	Setting out fire	do 10	Fined $25.00 and costs or 1 month h. l.	July 1, 1897	Little Red River	To be collected.
do	MoneyDress do	do	do 10	do do	do	do	do
do	Vermillion Springs (Cree Indian)	do	do 10	do do	do	do	do
do	Amedee do	Setting out poison.	do 15	do do	Sept. 15, 1897	Vermillon	do
do	Issac Gagnon (Cree Indian	do	do 15	do do	do	do	do
do	Pruden Deniere	do	do 15	do do	do	do	do
do	Don. Carey	do	do 15	do do	do	do	do
do	Lawrence Aubray	do	do 22	do do	do	Big Point	do
do	Marten Millette	do	do 22	do do	do	do	do
do	Wm. Kipple White	do	April 20	Fined $50.00 and costs do	Forthwith	Fort Saskatchewan	Sent Lieut. Gov. 21/4/97

Fort Saskatchewan, 24th April, 1897.

Certified correct,

A. M. JARVIS,
Inspector in charge of Patrol.

Forwarded to the Commissioner, 29th April, 1897.—A. H. Griesbach, *Supt.*